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Subject: Holding Fast

Posted by [Mark L](#) on Sat, 09 Dec 2017 18:10:22 GMT

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I was reading something by James on the subject a while ago and have been thinking about it ever since. I have a very close friend who has been with me through thick and thin for Lo these many yrs. We sat (and sit) under the faith message together.

He went through some very bad times. Lost everything but his health and his relationship with the Lord. He has pretty much come through it now.

The point here is the holding fast.

I saw in his life and (later looking at mine) that in his heart he had a very strong hold on the Lord which enabled him to endure. What I saw subsequent to that and had never seen before or really thought of was that the Lord also had a very strong hold on him.

We have been taught so much about enduring holding fast getting faith in your heart to endure . . . and that is all true and can't be minimized.

BUT and its a big BUT

Its also true that if we belong to Jesus he has a strong hold on us as well. Jesus said "no one is able to take us out of Fathers hand" The clear understanding there is that we are protected and cared for and held close.

Obviously we have a responsibility but it is a two sided issue.

John10/28-29 Neither shall any pluck them out of mine hand . . .My Father ... is greater than all and no one is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand.

Ps.18/35-36 ... thy right hand hath holden me up ... Thou hast enlarged my steps under me that my feet did not slip.

I think that whether we see it or not there is an ongoing process and operation around us by God and his angels to keep us and to keep our hearts turned toward him. We just don't see it most of the time.

Again obviously it's true its our responsibility but it is also true thats its a two way street.

Rom. 8/35-

Who shall separate us from the love of God . . . for I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come nor height nor depth nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord

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Subject: Re: Holding Fast  
Posted by [Mark L](#) on Sat, 09 Dec 2017 18:16:54 GMT  
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In light of the post I made above I couldn't help thinking of the prophecy by Zacharias, John the Baptist father.

Luke 1/67-79

. . . that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us . . . That he would grant unto us that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear in Holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.

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Subject: Re: Holding Fast  
Posted by [Mark L](#) on Sat, 09 Dec 2017 22:04:29 GMT  
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I meant to put this in the original post but ran out of time so here it is . . .

. . . our election is utterly unshakable because our election

"stands in the eternal and immutable good will of God toward us and that it cannot be altered by any of the storms of the world . . . We should then cultivate a spirit of fortitude and courage which may serve to sustain us under the weight of all the calamities we may be called upon to endure, so that we may be able to testify to the truth that when reduced to the extremity of despair we have never ceased to trust in God.

RH Bainton quoting Calvin.

Its a two way street guys and sometimes its just him doing the holding.

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Subject: Re: Holding Fast  
Posted by [william](#) on Tue, 12 Dec 2017 05:50:51 GMT  
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Here is the way the progression generally goes: (in my thinking, at least)

I accepted Jesus and I will hold fast to the truth. (Focus is on Me.)

I received Jesus and I will hold fast to the truth. (Focus shifts a little but still on Me.)

He accepted me and He keeps me by His Hand. (I'm so humble.)

This becomes my public persona but in my mind I still often entertain the idea that it still depends on me and if I slack off, then the deal is off!

Some days I focus on His Grace: He predestined My Salvation so I'm in, no matter what I do!

Some days I think it all depends on me: Everything depends on whether or not I can endure to the end.

And I wobble-wobble back and forth as I walk through life. This oscillation is usually the result of the particular trial I'm facing at the time.

Yes, I know about James 1:6 and the waves of the sea, not to mention Rom7:15-25 but on those other days I might run across Eph2:5-9 and sit back and enjoy my liberty! I buttress myself by jumping over to Galatians and determine that I'm truly a free man! (Until I read about some of them being bewitched and start the cycle over again, knowing that I'd better be careful.)

I've observed a few things that I think are significant (at least for me) as I go through these wild swings:

1) The more I read His word the more secure I trust in His promise to preserve me. (i.e. His preservation) I'm happy, fulfilled, a truly free man, victorious in Christ.

2) The further I am from actively pursuing point 1, the less confident I am in His faithfulness, and my ability becomes the driving force in maintaining this relationship. (i.e. My perseverance) I'm like those beasts when the Lord hides His face from them in Psa104:29.

3) Point 2 leads me back to point 1 and my faith is renewed. (Romans 10:17)

I don't know if the above is universal to all Christians, or not... (probably because I don't have a lot of fellowship) but that has been my experience.

Blessings,

William

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Subject: Re: Holding Fast

Posted by [james](#) on Tue, 12 Dec 2017 21:37:33 GMT

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william wrote on Mon, 11 December 2017 23:50

I don't know if the above is universal to all Christians, or not... (probably because I don't have a lot of fellowship) but that has been my experience.

Blessings,

William

Even though I attend an assembly every week and even have been part of a 'small group' of men, I get far more 'fellowship' from conversations/discussions here with you guys.

William, I believe you have accurately described the 'experience' of ALL Christians. Otherwise we wouldn't be admonished throughout the Bible, especially by Paul in the NT, to do these things...put on the whole armor; be diligent; hold fast; take heed; be holy; flee sin; guard our eyes/mind;. BUT.....God, in His Grace and Mercy and understanding of our frailty, gives us reassurance over and over that He'll NEVER leave us or forsake us; that NOTHING can take us from His hand; that He LOVES us so much that He sacrificed His only Son, Jesus, to redeem us from our sins.

There can never be too much importance placed on study and daily feeding on God's Word, It both guides us as well as reminds us of this truth we so often and easily seem to forget....It's not within man to guide his own steps (Jeremiah 10:23) and what we're told in Romans 8:1 and Eph. 2:8-9

Yes, hold fast brethren; but remember always this truth, when 'holding on' seems to be too much, His grip is stronger than ours...it won't slip (John 10:28)

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Subject: Re: Holding Fast

Posted by [Mark L](#) on Thu, 14 Dec 2017 14:28:52 GMT

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james wrote on Tue, 12 December 2017 16:37

Yes, hold fast brethren; but remember always this truth, when 'holding on' seems to be too much, His grip is stronger than ours...it won't slip (John 10:28)

Yup I agree. Thats what I was trying to say. We were taught back in the day that as we persevere he preserves. I agree with that but sometimes one side needs to be emphasized.

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